

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 01897 250822Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EB-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 /029 W
-----250838 039702 /14

R 241456Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2183
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AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 1897

USDOC FOR MEPD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BENC, US, IV, FR
SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR
MAJOR SWITCHING CENTERS

REFS: A) STATE 006080, B) ABIDJAN 0425, C) ABIDJAN 0865,
D) STATE 027895, E) STATE 037953

1. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED SWITCHING SYSTEMS AND OTHER
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONTRACTS WITH IBRD VP CHAUFFONNIER
FEBRUARY 23. CHAUFFONNIER SAID THAT IN MEETING
FEBRUARY 22 WITH FINANCE MINISTER KONAN BEDIE, HE HAD
REITERATED IBRD'S PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITION THAT IBRD'S
PARTICIPATION IN ENTIRE PROJECT WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED
IF BANK WAS NOT SATISFIED THAT ITS REQUIREMENTS HAD
BEEN MET. IN RESPONSE AMBASSADOR'S QUESTION, CHAUFFONNIER
SAID THAT IBRD WAS EXAMINING MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY GOIC
TO SUPPORT ITS POSITION ON CONTRACT AWARD
TO FRENCH FIRM. HE HAD RECEIVED NO WORD FROM WASHINGTON
ON RESULTS OF THIS EXAMINATION WHICH HE ASSUMED WAS NOT
YET COMPLETED. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL
TO HAVE RESULTS IN TIME FOR CHAUFFONNIER TO COMMUNICATE
IBRD REACTION PERSONALLY TO BEDIE. CHAUFFONNIER, WHO
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DEPARTS ABIDJAN TODAY, SAID THIS WAS NOT RPT NOT POSSIBLE.
FURTHERMORE, HE BELIEVED THAT HE HAD EFFECTIVELY REAFFIRMED
IBRD POSITION TO BEDIE AND THAT GOIC KNEW WHAT WAS AT
STAKE. CHAUFFONNIER ADDED THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO GIVE
GOIC IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS POSSIBILITY OF "NEGOTIATING"
WITH BANK TO CIRCUMVENT IBRD GUIDELINES. FOR THIS
REASON, NEITHER HE NOR OTHER IBRD OFFICIALS HAD MENTIONED

ANY FIGURE, SUCH AS TEN PERCENT, WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE MAXIMUM ACCEPTABLE DEVIATION FROM NORTH'S LOW BID. BANK'S POSITION WAS THAT IT WOULD REACH ITS CONCLUSION ONLY AFTER CAREFUL STUDY OF FULL DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED BY GOIC. IF DATA SUBMITTED WAS INSUFFICIENT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR GOIC TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

2. JAMES CHAFFEY, IBRD DIVISION CHIEF IN WEST AFRICAN BUREAU, SAID BANK OFFICIALS WERE DELAYING EXAMINATION OF REQUESTS FOR TENDER ON OTHER PORTIONS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECT (CABLE, TELETYPE AND TRANSMISSION) UNTIL THIS MATTER IS RESOLVED. CLOSING DATE FOR BIDS IS NOW APRIL 26. HOWEVER, SHOULD IBRD REQUEST MORE INFORMATION ON SWITCHING SYSTEMS CONTRACT, THIS DATE MIGHT BE PUT BACK.

3. FYI. NORTH ELECTRIC REPRESENTATIVE TOLD EMBOFFS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT FRENCH SWITCHING EQUIPMENT COST IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$22 MILLION, AS OPPOSED TO NORTH'S \$13.5 MILLION SUBMISSION.
STEARNS

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